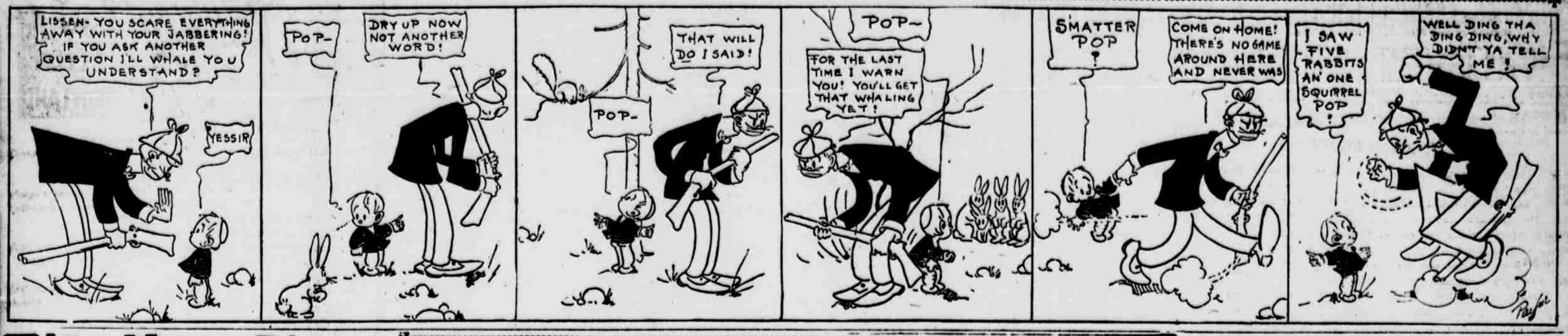
"S'Matter, Pop?"

By C. M. Payne



The New Plays

"The 'Mind the Paint' Girl" of No Importance.

BY CHARLES DARNTON.

GOING to see "The 'Mind the Paint' Girl" at the Lyceum Theatre last night seemed a good deal like going to a party at which champagne grows so stale and unprofitable as to make the morning after seem a depressingly dark-brown hue.

It is the atmosphere rather than the plot of this Pinero play that thickens. For two acts, in fact, there is nothing but atmosphere. All that is established in this seeming waste of time is that Lily Parradel is an extremely popular musical comedy lady. Needless to say she has a large and rather mixed following, and all for a song, "Mind the Paint," with which she has warbled her way out of obscurity at the Pandora Theatre. The admirers of this spoiled darling bring her gifts on her birthday and then give her a "party" in the foyer of the theatre after the night performance. A soldier, Capt. Nicholas Geyer, has given up his regiment to be her bodyguard, and young Lord Farncombe, who has proved his rare courage by sitting through twenty-three performances of the piece in which she appears, dances attendance upon her at the birthday celebration.

Up to this point the play resembles musical comedy, especially when the Captain puts on false whiskers and acts as a waiter in order to keep a jealous eye on Lily. That Pinero should resort to this absurdly simple device is the most surprising thing about the play. It is not an easy matter to associate England's foremost dramatist with false whiskers. Happily, however, this matter goes no further. After long delay the plot is finally opened with a latchkey that Lily allows the Captain to carry in his capacity as her faithful escort from the theatre at night. A more innocent latchkey was never made.

Having given the Captain a night off, Lily allows the adoring lordling to see her home with other friends and then grants him an opportunity to ask her to be his wife. At this unearthly hour—4 in the morning—the play really begins. In an effort to make him understand that in marrying her he would be doing a very foolish thing she tells him all about herself—of her lowly origin and the uphill road she has travelled in reaching the Pandora Theatre. Then the Captain lets himself in with the latchkey and starts a row that Lily finishes by turning on him. After she has opened his eyes to the highly honorable situation, he sits down and tells the story of his life. Lily is so moved at learning what she has made of it that she promises to marry the poor, useless chap and save Lord Farncombe from the fate that overtakes so many thoughtless members of the English aristocracy. But before Lily has her reckings on after a few hours of broken rest, the Captain brings young Farnombe back to the house and cheerfully gives him a clear field. Lily's misgivings e met by the remark from her mother: "Think wot a lot o' good you're all ing to the aristocracy!"

In England the Gaiety girls may be "a menace to society." But here we take musical comedy ladies less seriously. As a result, "The 'Mind the Paint' " is of no importance except in the way of light entertainment that offers siderable novelty. While members of the theatrical profession and their followers may argue about the truth or unreality of the picture that the author ows, it's not worth taking seriously. If Pinero chooses to have one stage siren work" an admirer for a motor car, while another "shakes down" a German on for her vacation expenses, that's his business. Our only concern is the y as a whole, and the truth is that it has little to commend it aside from the me in which Lily tells of her struggles and her triumphs.

Miss Billie Burke failed to make the most of her one real opportunity by not ting it simply. The sincerity so necessary here was missing. Her burst of per was much more convincing. While she coquetted with her role from being to end, she sang and danced prettily when "Mind the Paint" was demded by the assembled company. In a role so well suited to her, however, might easily be expected to act more naturally. Miss Lydia Rachel made the boiled mother by far the best and truest character in the play. She seemed all the world like the mother of our old friend "Mr. Hopkinson." In short, was a joy. Morton Selten fluffed about rather amusingly as a sort of male aperon. William Raymond played young Lord Farncombe with his heart in mouth. As the jealous Captain, H. E. Herbert made a great deal more noise n was necessary. He was the queerest type of all in the play of types.

Picked Up From Here and There.

No country is better off than Switzerland in the matter of water power, and its resources of force are still unutilized. It is now proposed to electrify the state railways and to supply the energy needed from the numerous water powers not yet developed. Already most of the funicular railways employ electricity.

The annexation of Chosen (Korea) by Japan has made the Tumen-Ula River the boundary between Russia and Japan. As the fishing rights in the waters of this river were not covered by the Russo-Japanese convention of 1907, it is reported that both governments are now collecting data regarding these fishing grounds.

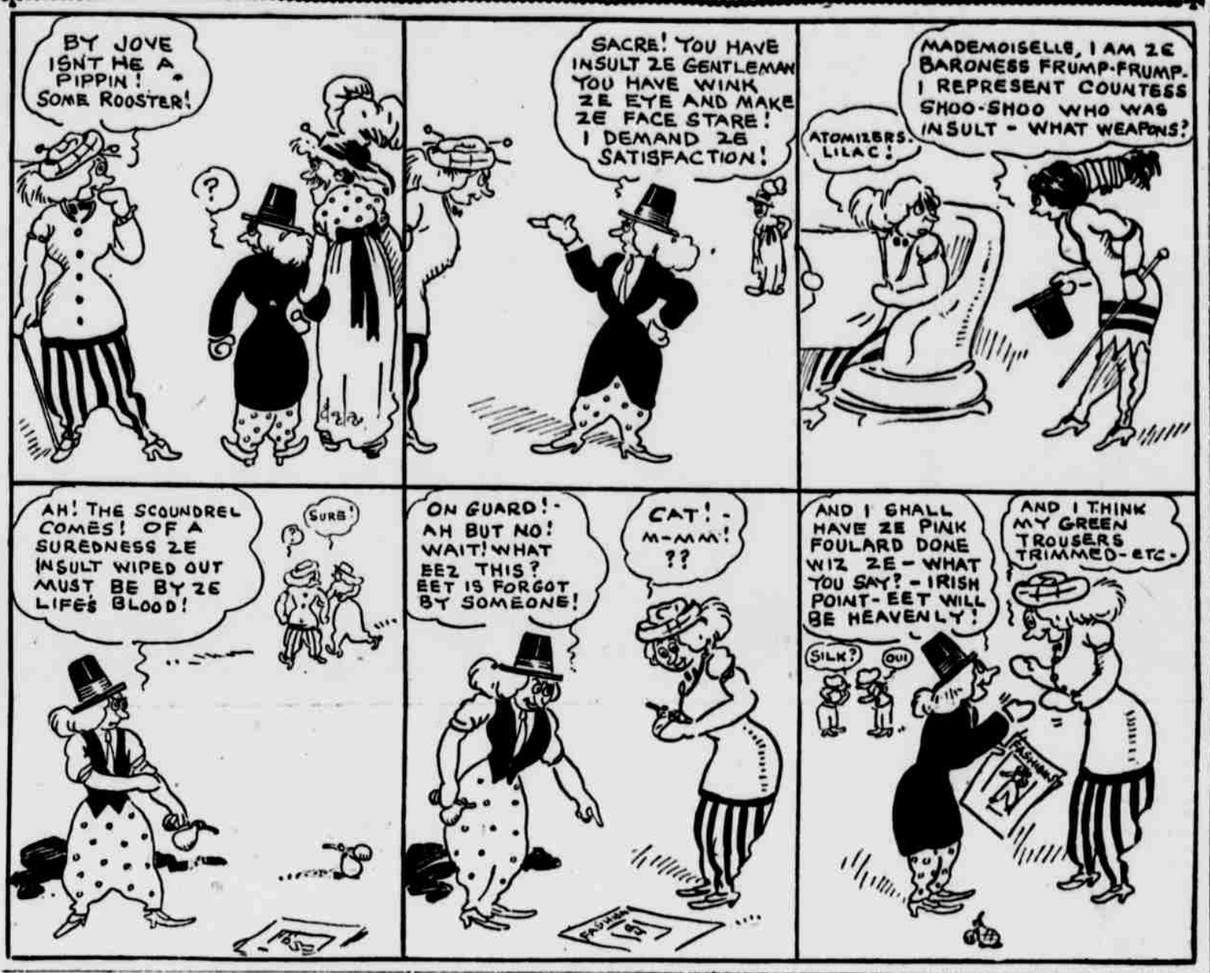
"The average porch," says an outdoor contemporary, "is undergoing a complete transformation." It is becoming a living room by day and sometimes a sleeping chamber by night, an open air apartment of comfort and beauty. With screens, curtains, comfortable chairs and settees, and suitable decorations and growing flowers, the porch may be destined to become the most attractive part of the American summer home.

Imparted Valor.

A NEW arrival strolled into the lobby of a popular Muskogee hotel a few evenings ago and walked rather unsteadily to the desk to register, buy the Kansas City Star. Turning to follow the porter to his room, there was a crash and bits of glass and an amber-colored liquid spread along the floor.

Before a porter could be summoned to mop it up a tiny mouse crept from under the cigar counter and lapped greedily at the liquor. Then mounting the edge of a cuspidor, the mouse exclaimed: "Where is that cat that was looking for me last night?"

∴ Some Day---(Maybe) ∴



Betty Vincent Gives Advice on Courtship and Marriage

The Bashful Swain.

BETTY VINCENT.

BASHFULNESS is a distressing weakness in either a young man or a young woman.

Not only is the bashful person very uncomfortable, but he or she usually contrives to make others ill at ease. Diffidence is frequently contagious.

Of course it is all only a form of self-consciousness. If the bashful sufferer analyzes his own mood he will surely find that he has been thinking all the time about himself. "I am so awkward—I am so shy—I don't know what to do with my hands—my feet look so big—I know I shall trip over the mat when I go out—I am sure they are all laughing at me." These are the thoughts that dominate the diffident person's brain.

The only way to cure yourself is to stop thinking about yourself and your possible defects and mistakes. Try it and see.

Different Nationalities.

"A. Z." writes: "I am deeply in love with a girl of a different nationality. Would our marriage be a happy one?"

It might be, though there is always a risk in such cases.

"A. S." writes: "A certain young man is paying me attention, but when we were out the other evening he deliberately started a flirtation with another girl. Is that an insult to me?"

Assuredly.

"L. Q." writes: "What position should be taken by a gentleman accompanying two young ladies?"

He should walk on the outside, next the street.

"B. D." writes: "I am acquainted with a young man whom I like very much and who I know likes me. I heard he was ill and wrote a note of condolence, but have had no answer as yet. What shall I do? Was it proper for me to write."

Perfectly proper, and you have only to wait till he is well enough to answer you by letter or in person.

Indifference.

"W. T." writes: "For a long time I was so studiously cold and indifferent to a certain man that he became totally discouraged and stopped seeing me. Now I have found out that I love him, but I know of no way to bring about a meeting. What shall I do?"

If you were really rude to him in the past you might write a note of apology.

"F. P." writes: "I am accepting attentions from a young man, but whenever we return home from any affair he wants to kiss me. Shall I permit this, as I am very fond of him?"

It isn't considered good form to let a man kiss you unless you are engaged to him.

"R. L." writes: "I am very much in love with a young man, but he is not earning much money and I know he cannot give me as good a home as my father supplies. Do you think I had better marry him?"

Only if you love him well enough to endure cheerfully a change in your manner of living.

Shall He Marry?

"S. R." writes: "I am a young man of twenty-three and very much in love. But my father's will forbids me to marry until I am thirty, on pain of losing all the property left in trust for me. What shall I do? I have a good position in business and could afford to marry."

It's a question of which you want most—the immediate marriage or the future money. You must decide for yourself.

"A. L." writes: "I often see a certain young man, whom I like very much. Would it be proper for me to ask him to call on me?"

No, he should ask your permission to call. Or, if your mother knows him, she may invite him for you.

Repartee in Black and White

By J. K. Bryans

Applicant—Say, boss, you don't want a good live man in your business, do you?
Boss—No, sir. I'm an undertaker, sir!

"Well, Doc, how are you making out with that new patent cold cure of yours?"
"Oh, I'm filling my sousheres!"

The Diamonds

By J. S. Fletcher

Romance of a Hoard of Missing Jewels and the Mystery Which Followed Them

SYNOPSIS OF PREVIOUS CHAPTERS.

Lal Dass, a Hindu gem smuggler, has discovered John Lindsay, a former shipmate on the ship Brahmaspootra, haggling in vain with Aaron Josephs, a pawnbroker, near Devonport, for a mysterious brass-bound box. Even after claiming the box as his own in the presence of a policeman, Lindsay fails. The Hindu accosts him and tells him that the only man besides themselves who knows what is in the box, Stefano Vanili, is in Dartmoor Prison for life for murdering an innkeeper who sold the box for a song after it had been left with him. The Hindu and the native rout the pawnshop at night. Josephs is stunned by the prick of a needle concealed in a false pocket pencil case, and is strangled by Lal Dass with a silk cord. In the Hindu's lodgings, Lindsay, frenzied by the sight of the marvellous diamond necklace taken from a secret drawer in the box, stabs Lal Dass.

Gathering up the diamonds, the box and the knife, he hurries out into the night, leaving the Hindu for dead. Just as he sinks the box and the knife in a pool at the water front he imagines himself followed.

CHAPTER V.

(Continued.)

What Happened in the Hut.

THE precious stones for which he had played a desperate game were in his pocket now, and there was no man to dispute possession of them with him. But he must turn them into money—and where was he going to do that? Come, he must think these matters over carefully. He proceeded to think as he walked slowly forward.

Ere very long the police would know that two men had been murdered that night in Plymouth, and they would want to know all about the matter. Was it possible that they would connect him with the deaths of Josephs and the Hindu? He wanted to think, but it seemed somehow no easy thing to think seriously.

To begin with, one policeman at any rate knew that there was a mystery lying around Josephs, the brass-bound box and himself. The police would find Josephs dead, and they would also find the box gone. Naturally they would think that he, Lindsay, had murdered him for the box. But also they would find Lal Dass murdered.

Would they connect the two things? If they did Lindsay saw some slight chance for himself. But if they put down the murder of the Hindu to some other person unknown and concentrated their attention on finding the man who had declared his intention of securing the brass-bound box from Joseph's keeping—what then?

The mere notion was appalling. The sweat broke out on Lindsay's forehead, and he glanced over his shoulder as though he expected to see the arm of the law stretched out to arrest him.

There was but one thing to be done—he must go right away until the thing blew over, or was less noised abroad. And he must go by road; he dare not risk showing himself at the railway station.

He knew the lay of the land pretty well, he would go off into Dartmoor and hide himself there for a day or two and gradually work his way across country to London or Bristol; he was not yet sure which. So he turned his face to the northeast and plodded steadily onward through the dark night. Now and then his fingers sought the bag in which he had carried away the diamonds.

Occasionally he paused to listen, fancying that he heard footsteps hurrying after him. Bit by bit the town and its outworks dropped away behind him, and he came into the open country. The night wind blew cheerfully against his cheek and refreshed him, and his mind, until then clouded over by gloomy thoughts, began to take a brighter view of matters.

Lindsay went forward along the high-road while the warm night almost imperceptibly faded into the first faint flush of an early summer morning. He walked for the most part with his head bent, but as the first shaft of light came stealing over the tops of the great Tors he looked up and saw that daylight was coming back to the world.

Already he had walked some distance—Tor Grove and Wilsey Court and Knackers Knowle lay behind him, and as the light increased he saw in front of him the wayside inn which stands at the four cross roads between Tamerton Pollott and Plym Bridge. It was still much too early for anybody to be stirring at the inn, but Lindsay dare not pass it, lest he should by any chance be seen and wondered at.

He turned away to the right, following the groves and copses down to Bickleigh Vale. It was bright morning by the time he had hidden himself in its luxuriant foliage, and all around him the birds were breaking out into a chorus of wild, unrestrained song.

He sat down on a fallen tree and thought his position over. Suddenly he leaped to his feet and went farther into the wood. His sharp eyes had caught sight of some recently felled timber with fresh chippings about it, and he concluded that ere long wood-cutters would appear on the scene and begin their day's toil. He had no mind to be discovered there and so hurried away.

Presently Lindsay came to the railway line which runs from Marsh Mills through Bickleigh Vale toward Yelverton. He stood against the railings and looked across at the great Saugh Wood, and it struck him that the thickness of the trees there would afford him better protection. So he crossed the line, waded through the river beyond and plunged into the depths of the wood.

The morning dew was lying heavily on everything, and ere long he was drenched and sodden with it. He turned to the left, and was soon in the midst of trees that almost touched each other. The air grew hot, stifling; Lindsay's brow streamed with sweat, and he began to pant with the exertion of toiling forward through that desert of green to which no breath of wind seemed to penetrate.

Something seemed to drive him forward through the wood without rest or stoppage. He would gladly have sat down and rested his limbs, which were now beginning to feel fatigued after his long tramp, but whenever he thought of doing so a feeling of fear urged him onward.

Now and then he fancied that he heard voices; then the crackling of a twig caused his heart to bound with a wild fear that pursuers were on his track. His eyes naturally turned right and left, seeking for sight of danger, and he himself began to feel like a hunted thing, though he told himself over and over again that the fear was all imagination and not real. But still he went onward.

He suddenly paused on finding himself on the edge of the wood and hearing voices outside. Advancing cautiously, he looked out from the last fringe of trees and saw that he was near Bickleigh bridge and that the voices were those of some country folk going to their work.

Just then the strokes of a clock sounded from somewhere ahead. He counted six of them, and remembered that it was twelve hours since he had tasted food. He was getting faint and hungry, and his appetite sharpened with every moment.

When the country folk had gone by, Lindsay emerged from the wood, and, having crossed the high road, set off toward the Tors. Once he turned aside into Saugh Prior, and bought bread and cheese at the little shop, and took a big draft of ale at the inn. He knew that they regarded him with surprise at both places, but he was too thirsty and hungry to mind that. He ate and drank, and then purchased more food and a bottle of ale, and carried this supply away with him.

All that morning Lindsay toiled on—up Saugh Moor, over the shoulder of Great Trowlesworthy Tor to Shavercombe Head, and thence across Longcombe and Erme toward Green Hill. The sun was blinding hot, but he passed on.

Once or twice he paused to take a drink from his bottle—the ale was warm and insipid, but without it he would have been dead beat, he said to himself.

At noon he came upon a half-ruined hut, standing in the middle of a patch of desolate moorlands on the north of Green Hill. He entered it and looked about him. It was cool and shady, and there was sufficient bracken and furze stored within it to make a soft couch.

Lindsay suddenly recognized that he was tired out and must rest. He could not go a yard further until he had rested. He flung himself down on the dried bracken, and in a moment was fast asleep.

CHAPTER VI.

The Man Hunt.

LINDSAY was dead beat. Stolid, brutal and unemotional as he was, the events of the preceding day and night had wrought on his feelings, and the long tramp through the woods and over the tors had completely exhausted him physically.

He slept on and on, and the afternoon wore away toward evening, and the sun cast strange shadows on the ridges and tors, but Lindsay saw nothing of it. He lay stretched out on the heap of bracken, sleeping the sleep of physical exhaustion.

While it was still broad daylight, and the sun was still above the tops of the trees, a figure came moving slowly across the landscape from the northward. It came in a strange fashion, now appearing in full view for a time, then disappearing altogether and cropping up again in another place. From afar off it looked like a blot of gray moving across the golden brow of the hillsides. Sometimes it moved at a rapid pace—that was when the ground was level; sometimes it came forward painfully and slowly—that was when the ground was rough and broken.

Had Lindsay been awake and watchful, he would have perceived that as the figure drew nearer to the hut on the side of Green Hill it resolved itself into that of a man.

The man was running like a hunted beast, and every now and then his head turned over his shoulder.

The noise of his panting breath came with a slight breeze as he made a new effort at the foot of the slope.

Lindsay might have seen, too, that the man was a convict, wearing the ugly prison dress, with its stampings of the broad arrow making it still more ugly. But Lindsay slept; he heard and saw nothing.

(To Be Continued.)